

An aerial photograph of a university campus with green lawns and red brick buildings under a clear blue sky. A laurel wreath with gold leaves is superimposed over the center of the image, framing the main title.

**BEST
ART**

SCHOOLS

IN THE WORLD

**& ART CAREERS IN THE
ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY**

BY: CHRISTOPHER CHIEN

Dedication

This video is dedicated to all those artists who despite all odds, followed their dreams and achieved success in becoming a professional artist.

This video is dedicated to all artists who despite all their adversity and struggle, were not successful in fulfilling their dreams in becoming a professional artist.

This video is dedicated to all artists who because of their circumstances, never had the chance to follow their dreams of being an artist.

This video is dedicated to all the generations of artists who came before me, and all the artists who came before them, who shared their knowledge, wisdom and experience with the next generation of artists.

Thank you.

Best Art Schools in the World

& Art Careers in the
Entertainment Industry

By: Christopher Chien

Last Updated 09.26.2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Author's Note.....	5
Preface	6
Introduction.....	7
Part 1: Art Careers.....	8
1.1 Animation Industry.....	9
1.2 Video Games.....	11
1.3 Movies.....	13
1.4 Themed Entertainment.....	15
1.5 Independent Artists.....	17
Part 2: Art Education.....	17
2.1 Art Schools.....	19
2.2 University.....	20
2.3 Private Art Academies	22
2.4 A Super Combo.....	23
Part 3: Art School Rankings.....	25
3.1 FZD School of Design	26
3.2 Art Center College of Design	27
3.3 Concept Design Academy.....	28
3.4 Brainstorm School.....	29
3.5 Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art....	30
3.6 Watts Atelier	31
3.7 Art Schools.....	32
3.8 Pre-College Programs	33
3.9 Universities	34
3.10 Online Classes.....	35
3.11 Mr. Chris Art Studio	36
3.12 Ranking Summary.....	37
3.13 Suggested Curriculum.....	38
Part 4: Final Tips.....	39
4.1 Embrace Change	40
4.2 Embrace Adversity	41
4.3 Art Contests	42
4.4 Embrace Money	43
4.5 Artist Salaries	44
4.6 Embrace Commissions	45
Conclusion	46
About the Author	47
Bonus Workbook	48



Author's Note

Before you dive into this eBook, please take a moment to watch the corresponding YouTube video. This eBook is designed to complement the video, providing the added convenience of clickable links to the artists' websites and the featured schools.

In essence, this eBook serves as a transcript of the YouTube video. While much of the content remains the same, some parts have been edited for clarity. You'll also find a few "Author's Notes" added to provide further insights on specific topics. It's important to note that the text here isn't as detailed as a traditional book; instead, I prioritize the images from the YouTube video to convey my messages.

Maintaining professionalism is essential, especially when discussing school rankings. I have friends teaching at some of these institutions, and openly criticizing them wouldn't be appropriate. In the YouTube video, I present images side by side, allowing you to form your own conclusions and judgments about which schools might be the right fit for you. When in doubt, let the artwork speak for itself.



Youtube Link: <https://youtu.be/hLn1MzhNlew>

Preface

Back when I started learning about being a concept artist in 1996, there wasn't much information available about concept art, aside from looking at the cool sketches from the pages of the Warcraft 2 instruction manual.

Nowadays, students face a different challenge – there is an overwhelming amount of information on the internet. Every artist has YouTube channels, TikTok videos, and classes, all offering various tips and tricks, such as "TOP 10 THINGS EVERY ARTIST MUST KNOW!" There is so much information that it's hard to know where to start and whom to trust.

Every professional artist has valuable advice to offer aspiring students. The artistic community is very generous. However, everyone seems to say something different. It's akin to the story of the blind men and the elephant, where seven blind people touch the elephant and describe something entirely different!

What I aim to do with this ebook/video is to provide context for the advice given by these artists. I want to show where their perspective so that students can piece together their advice to see a more holistic picture.

I feel compelled to do this because I believe I have a unique privilege of being born during the age of the internet and social media. I witnessed the birth of 56k internet and the early days when artists started sharing images of their artwork on internet forums. Through LinkedIn, I've seen people's entire careers evolve, from interns to junior artists to art directors. Through the artistic community, I've had the opportunity to track the progress of artists across a multitude of industries, including Animation, Film, Video Games, and Theme Parks. This ebook/video project is a culmination of countless hours of meticulous research and draws upon the collective experiences of thousands of artists. I hope it proves to be a valuable and indispensable resource for all who explore it.

- Chris Chien

Introduction

I've specifically created this book for my students who are aged 10-15 years old and their parents. These students are in middle school/high school and are interested in pursuing a career in art but aren't really sure where to start. While I've designed a lot of this content to help the parents, I hope that the students are just as actively learning and researching their future career.

This book will be divided into four parts:

1. **Art Careers:** Before we can delve into schools, we first need to define the type of art career we are preparing for. It's essential to have a plan before embarking on your journey.
2. **Art Education:** We will explore various types of art education. Because art is not a traditional career, there will be some differences in the educational experience.
3. **Art School Rankings:** I will rank my favorite schools based on quality and value. Many schools out there offer subpar education while burdening their graduates with massive debt for 30-40 years. Avoid those schools.
4. **Tips and Tricks:** I will provide you with my 2023 tips for students to significantly enhance their chances of becoming professional artists. These won't be cliché tips like "Follow your passion." Instead, I'll offer actionable and sometimes controversial advice to give young artists a competitive edge. The art industry is highly competitive."

What is an artist?

It's up to your interpretation, right? I mean, if I asked you what a doctor was, you'd probably think of a family doctor. But a doctor could also be a dentist, an optometrist, a veterinarian, psychiatrist, a physicist who has a PhD, and so on. Same goes for artists. It depends on their specific job.

For the purpose of this book, I'm going to focus on the art jobs in the entertainment industry. If you would like to design video games, movies or theme parks, this would be a good book for you.

Now, I know there are other art-related careers out there like fashion design, illustration, interior design, graphic design, and architecture. We won't be covering them in this video so we can really focus on the entertainment industry. There are plenty of resources online if you want to learn about those other careers.

Part 1: Art Careers

In this section, we will go over art careers for Animation, Games, Movies, Theme Parks as well as Independent Artists.

ART JOBS IN ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Categorized by Industry, Style, Subject Matter



- Characters
- Environment
- Robot/ Vehicle
- Props



- Characters
- Background Paint
- Props
- Storyboard
- Visual Development



- Characters
- Environment
- Robot/ Vehicle
- Props
- Storyboard
- Keyart



- Illustration
- Show Set Design
- 3D Modeling
- Graphic Design

I. Animation Industry

First, we will talk about the animation industry. Now, the biggest mistake that I see a lot of kids make is that they want to become a traditional Disney animator. The problem with that is that most films are now animated in 3-D. While there are some 2-D animation productions out there, the jobs are scarce. People don't realize that there is so much more that goes into an animated film than just the animation itself.

1) Character Design

First of all, there is character design. With character design, you need to be able to draw characters in different styles and from various angles. You will often need to do "turnaround views" which is when you draw a character from front, back, profile and 3/4 views.

2) Background Painter

Another important role in animation is the background painter. The layout artist first draws the background, and then the background painter uses their skills in color, light, shadow, and perspective to bring the scene to life. Background painters will need to be especially good with color to convey the mood of the scene.

3) Prop Designer

Third, there are prop designers. These are the people responsible for designing and creating all the small objects and items that appear in a show or film. One of the prop designer's key jobs is to draw objects at scale next to characters to show how big it is. They will also need to draw the objects at different angles and be really good with perspective.

4) Storyboard Artist

Storyboard artists play a crucial role in the animation industry. This is a great alternative to becoming a 2-D animator. They are responsible for creating a visual blueprint of the story, and showing how the scenes will play out through a series of drawings. This requires not only strong figure drawing and perspective abilities but also an understanding of storytelling, pacing, camera direction, and how to effectively convey emotion and mood through imagery.

5) Visual Development Artist

Finally, there is the visual development artist (or vis dev for short). Vis Dev artists are responsible for creating the artistic style of the movie or show. Visual development isn't necessarily a separate discipline, as it often encompasses all those jobs or just a few. They must have a range of skills and the ability to work on characters, backgrounds, props, color keys and even storyboards. It's one of the most popular and sought after jobs in animation.

You will often find visual development artists working on movies - also known as Feature Animation. If they are working on a TV show, that is known as Series

Animation. It's important to note that the Feature Animation and Series Animation will often have different art styles and requirements due to time and budget constraints. After each section, I will be including links to the featured artist's websites, as well as suitable YouTube channels that provide more in-depth information on their respective industries.

Featured Artists

Name	Website	Specialization
Aaron Blaise	creatureartteacher.com	Creature Designer
Bruce Timm	instagram.com/brucetimmofficial	Character Designer
Stephen Silver	silvertoons.com/portfolio	Character Designer
Elora Lyda	eloralysda.com	Character Designer
April Eriksson	aedraws.com	Character & Prop Designer
Arthur Loftis	artstation.com/arthurloftis	Background Layout & Paint
Bre Galloway	artofbregalloway.com	Background Paint
Amy Chen Jr.	amychenjr.com/propdesign	Prop Designer
Toniko Pantoja	tonikopantoja.com	Storyboard Artist
Ben Juwono	bjwno.net	Storyboard Artist
Zac Retz	artstation.com/zacretz	Visual Development
Nathan Fowkes	nathanfowkes.com	Visual Development
Jason Scheier	parallaxinfinite.com	Visual Development

Youtube Channels

Name	Youtube Channel	Specialization
Laura Price	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78HmmR9Jvy4	Background Painter
MewtripleD	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1uTf4jH-wbE	Storyboard Artist
Toniko Pantoja	https://www.youtube.com/@TonikoPantoja	Storyboard Artist
BaM Animation	https://www.youtube.com/@BaMAnimation/about	Series Animation

II. Video Games

Now, let's venture into the dynamic world of the video game industry. Unlike the stylized approach often seen in animation, video game artists predominantly gravitate toward a more realistic style, although artistic styles can range from cartoony to hyper-realistic, depending on the game and the studio's vision.

In the video game industry, artists are primarily known as "concept artists," and they often specialize in various domains. Each specialization requires unique strengths, expertise, and skills, and artists may choose to become versatile by mastering one or more of these specializations.

1) Character Design

If your passion lies in character design, you'll need to excel in figure drawing, armor, and costume design. Character designers frequently craft multiple variations of characters and their attire, considering their functionality within the game world.

2) Environment Artist

Environment artists play a pivotal role in shaping the video game experience. They craft the landscapes and atmospheres that players navigate. This task involves contemplating how the environment translates into a 3D model and how players will interact with it. An environment artist must possess proficiency in both 2D and 3D art, with 3D skills being the industry standard.

3) Robots and Vehicles

Those inclined toward designing robots, vehicles, and other hard surface elements must excel in perspective, industrial design, and 3D modeling. This specialization demands the creation of designs that are not only visually captivating but also functional within the game's mechanics.

4) Creature Design

Creature design offers another captivating avenue in the video game industry. Artists in this field craft diverse variations of creatures, taking into account their movements and interactions with players.

5) Prop Designer

Prop designers are responsible for defining the aesthetics of objects such as boxes, potions, rocks, weapons, and armor. Injecting creativity and unique designs into these everyday objects is vital for creating a fully immersive gaming experience.

One of the distinctive aspects of game design is the level of interactivity and player participation. Unlike animated films, where you passively experience the story as a viewer, video games allow players to actively participate in the narrative. If you relish the prospect of designing challenges and obstacles within games, this career path might be your calling!

Featured Artists

Artist	Website	Specialization
Drew Hill	https://www.artstation.com/drewhill	Characters
Ryan Phair	https://www.artstation.com/ryanphair	Environments
Natasha Tan	https://natashatanart.myportfolio.com	Environments
Bryant Momo Koshu	https://www.artstation.com/peachlab	Robots and Vehicles
Sam Santala	https://www.artstation.com/samsantala	Creatures
Ashleigh Warner	https://www.artstation.com/ashdoodles	Props
Trent Kaniuga	https://www.artstation.com/trentkaniuga	Generalist
Jordan Powers	https://www.artstation.com/jordtron5000	Props

Youtube Channels

Name	Youtube Channel	Specialization
Trent Kaniuga	https://www.youtube.com/c/TrentKaniuga	Generalist
FZD School	https://www.youtube.com/user/FZDSCHOOL	Mechs and Environments
Marc Brunet	https://www.youtube.com/user/bluefley00	Characters
Tyler Edlin	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCm9pCim4dDN4KJZUILGizgA	Environments

III. Movies

Hollywood films are often where some of the best artists go to work. They are usually very experienced, having already worked in the game or animation industry. They are expected to produce a large volume of high-quality work in a short amount of time. These artists may go by different names, such as concept artist (usually associated with games), visual development artist (usually associated with animation), or illustrator (usually associated with books and magazine) - but if they are working on a movie production, their responsibilities are essentially the same. Let's talk about some of the things they design.

1) Characters

Character design in film is typically done in a photo-realistic style. Artists need to consider the actors playing those roles and capture their likeness. Character designers also need to design the clothing and work very closely with the costume designers, and the Director to really capture the look and feel of the each individual character.

2) Environments

The environment and production design in movies are different from games in that movies will use existing places and build physical sets. These artists need to consider the best lighting, camera angles, and staging to effectively tell the story. Sometimes artists will need to create matte paintings that extend the set or paint over the filmed footage to provide artistic reference for the visual effects artists.

3) Vehicle/Prop Design

Designing robots, vehicles, and props in movies is super important for Hollywood Blockbusters. The process shares similarities with the gaming industry. Most of the designs are created in 3D, while other times they are physically constructed for use in the film.

4) Creatures and Monsters

Creatures in films resemble those found in video games, but a significant difference is that the monsters are often created with makeup, prosthetics, and suits for actors. Alternatively, the director may choose to use motion capture and CGI to bring these characters to life.

5) Storyboards

Storyboarding in film is similar to storyboarding in animation. A minor difference is that the drawing style may be a little more realistic in terms of proportions and shading. It's similar in that it serves as a visual blueprint to map out the important scenes of the movie.

6) Key Frames

Key Art or Key Frames highlight significant moments in the film. Artists may be tasked to create additional illustrations for marketing purposes, such as book covers or

posters for Comic-Con. While time constraints prevent artists from creating key art for every scene, these pieces are some of the most captivating and visually striking artwork for the movie.

These artists in Hollywood are incredibly talented and use their skills not only to make movies more immersive and visually impressive but also to impact culture and leave a lasting legacy.

Featured Artists

Artist Name	Website
Andy Park	https://www.andyparkart.com
Phillip Boutte Jr.	https://www.artstation.com/phillipbouttejr
Ryan Meinerding	https://www.artstation.com/ryanmeinerding
Emmanuel Shiu	http://www.eshiu.com
Steve Jung	https://www.stevejungart.com
Dylan Cole	https://dylancolestudio.com
Ben Proctor	http://www.benprocter.com
John J. Park	http://www.jparked.com
Vitaly Bulgarov	https://www.bulgarov.com
Jerad Marantz	http://jeradsmarantz.blogspot.com
Dan Milligan	https://www.danmilligan.com
Ryan Church	http://ryanchurch.com

Youtube Channels

Channel Name	YouTube Link
Emmanuel Shiu	youtube.com/watch?v=Jra18StlbZc
Art Cafe (Maciej Kuciara)	youtube.com/@ArtCafeTV
Andy Park Art	youtube.com/watch?v=WgyoYoXUf6M
Lightbox Expo	youtube.com/watch?v=3YpklCaVf8o

IV. Themed Entertainment

Theme parks are part of the larger industry known as "Themed Entertainment," which encompasses various elements such as zoos, museums, hotels, retail stores, and more. Designing for themed entertainment is different from video games or movies, particularly due to the architectural and engineering components involved, as they are building permanent structures. That being said, here are some key art-related skill sets within the field:

1) Illustration

- a. **POV (Point of View) Illustration:** These illustrations show the concept from the guest's perspective, emphasizing the idea and overall feeling. These paintings often use photos or 3D models as a base to maintain accuracy and believability. Illustrators in themed entertainment need to be comfortable in drawing all sorts of subject matter including people, environments, vehicles, and props.
- b. **Aerial View Illustration:** These awe-inspiring illustrations show the concept from a "Bird's-Eye" perspective, which provides an overview of the entire theme park or land. Because of the amount of detail, it is a challenging task typically reserved for senior artists. These illustrations are often painted on top of 3D models for accuracy.
- c. **Elevation View:** Elevation views present buildings from the side in a flat perspective. They are highly architectural and offer a clear presentation of the designs, highlighting the buildings in a visually stunning way.
- d. **Storyboards:** Storyboards are frequently utilized for dark rides, showcasing a scene-by-scene play through of the ride experience. While they have often fewer frames compared to the thousands of frames found in movie or animation storyboards, each frame is typically more detailed, capturing lighting and shadow aspects.

2) 3D Modeling

3D modeling plays a significant role in theme park design, allowing designers to test sight-lines and ensure appealing visuals from every accessible angle for guests. Safety is paramount. Designers must comply with building codes to ensure structures are safe in addition to looking visually appealing. 3D models often support illustrations and show set designers, while the modeling itself is an art form. Animations and flythroughs can be created to showcase the theme park in ways that static images cannot.

3) Show Set Design

Show set design involves creating schematic drawings. They are traditionally hand-drawn or can be produced using software like AutoCAD or Illustrator. These drawings are precise and dimensioned, serving as crucial documents for fabricators. Show set design includes details such as materials, finishes, and graphic design elements. It may incorporate 3D models to enhance accuracy and clarity in the design process.

4) Graphic Design

Graphic design is essential in theme park design, encompassing menus, logos, wayfinding signage, and other visual elements. These designs contribute to the immersive experience by providing clear communication and blending harmoniously with the environment. Guests encounter numerous signs, posters, graphics, and patterns throughout the park, often without consciously noticing them.

College Majors

If you would like become theme park designer, majoring in Architecture, Set design or Interior Design can give you a well rounded skill set. Students majoring in art or engineering also do well, but may need to take additional coursework to balance out their skills.

Featured Artists

Name	Website	Specializations
Chris Chien	chris-chien.com	Illustration
Luc Steadman	artstation.com/lucsteadman	Illustration
Richard Gutierrez	behance.net/gallery/1536071/Richard-Gutierrez-Themed-Design-Portfolio	Illustration
Brandon Rubino	brandonrubino.com	Show Set Design, Graphic Design
Melody Matheny	melodymatheny.com	Show Set Design, Graphic Design, Illustration
Lin Shih	https://linshihartist.wixsite.com/portfolio	3D Modeling, Graphic Design
Eric Cabico	ericsworldcreative.com	Generalist

Youtube Channels

Channel Name	YouTube Link
Mr. Chris Art Studio	youtube.com/channel/UCMhgdKEXafIMKeyq2UWQBQg
Theron Skees	youtube.com/watch?v=ENSMxDumYuQ
Don Carlson	youtube.com/@IMVUCreator/videos
Themed Entertainment Association	youtube.com/@themedentertainmentassocia826

V. Independent Artists

Let's explore another compelling path: becoming an independent artist. While it's commonly believed that artists selling their work on the street won't earn much, those who sell at conventions can regularly generate thousands of dollars in just a weekend, achieving a highly respectable six-figure income. However, it's important to acknowledge that this lifestyle can be quite exhausting due to constant traveling.

In the past decade, social media has emerged as a powerful tool that has revolutionized the businesses of independent artists. It has allowed them to supercharge their careers and reach a wider audience.

A notable success story is Ross Tran, the artist behind the popular YouTube channel RossDraws, which boasts over 1 million subscribers. Like many YouTubers, Ross earns a living through ads, sponsorships, merchandise sales (such as prints and art books), online courses, and recurring subscriptions on platforms like Patreon. He also attends conventions to connect with fans. Ross's remarkable success led to his recognition in Forbes' prestigious 30 under 30 list, and he reported an annual income of \$500,000. To put this in perspective, the average Disney Imagineer earns \$90,000 per year.

While many artists aspire to follow this path, not everyone achieves the same level of success. If you're considering this career, it would be beneficial to pursue additional courses in business or marketing. Being adept with technology and social media is crucial in this field. The exciting part is that anyone with a smartphone can explore this career opportunity. I've had students as young as 13 years old with 20,000 TikTok followers. If you possess talent and a knack for social media, being a content creator could be an excellent career choice for you.

Youtube Channels

Channel Name	Video URL
Ross Draws	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hz7mgUDxEqs
MewTripled	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ERhBwzCoemE
Proko	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TX4ldBPB_Ko
One Fantastic Week	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTPWij8rnmE

Part 2: Art Education

Now that we have talked about what it means to be a professional artist in the entertainment industry, we can now discuss which schools are most suitable to help you achieve your goals. We will talk about three forms of education: art schools, universities and private art academies. Let's get started!

	 PRO	 CON
 ART SCHOOLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- FUN- IMMERSIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- EXPENSIVE 
 UNIVERSITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION- DIVERSE CLASSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- LESS FOCUS ON ART 
 PRIVATE ART ACADEMIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- GREAT INSTRUCTORS- FLEXIBLE - AFFORDABLE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- NO DEGREE- LESS STRUCTURE

I. Art Schools

Art schools are what most people associate with an art education. Art school can be a blast! You'll take 4-5 art classes per semester, and your teachers will give you guidance to help you build a solid foundation in art. You'll be fully immersed in art and surrounded by a ton of like-minded people who will become your friends and peers.

But let's be real, tuition can be expensive. Nowadays, it usually costs around \$200,000. (show table) But don't worry, if you have an awesome portfolio, you can still get significant scholarships.

**Approximate Costs are for tuition only, do not include room & board and other misc. fees. Please see school website for most accurate and up to date costs and fees.*

Full Name	City, State	Tuition*	Website URL
Rhode Island School of Design	Providence, RI	\$230,000	risd.edu
School of the Art Institute of Chicago	Chicago, IL	\$220,000	saic.edu
California Institute of the Arts	Valencia, CA	\$220,000	calarts.edu
Pratt Institute	Brooklyn, NY	\$220,000	pratt.edu
Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art	New York, NY	\$200,000	cooper.edu
Ringling College of Art and Design	Sarasota, FL	\$200,000	ringling.edu
Art Center College of Design	Pasadena, CA	\$200,000	artcenter.edu
Otis College of Art and Design	Los Angeles, CA	\$200,000	otis.edu
Maryland Institute College of Art	Baltimore, MD	\$190,000	mica.edu
Savannah College of Art and Design	Savannah, GA	\$160,000	scad.edu
Laguna College of Art and Design	Laguna Beach, CA	\$140,000	lcad.edu
Columbus College of Art and Design	Columbus, OH	\$130,000	ccad.edu
Academy of Art University	San Francisco, CA	\$130,000	academyart.edu

II. University

If you're looking for a more affordable option, going to a university with a good art program could be a great choice, especially if it's a state school. It's a perfect opportunity to get a well-rounded education while pursuing your passion for art. Plus, you'll get to meet people from all sorts of backgrounds and majors. If you want the classic 'college experience' you see in movies and TV, this could be the way to go.

However, if you're serious about becoming a professional artist, a university might not be the best choice. You'll likely only be able to take 1 - 2 art classes per semester, which might not be enough to hone your skills. The classes are more catered to students who want a general education. Most classes tend to focus on conceptual thinking rather than practical execution.

But even if the art program isn't the strongest, universities have their own strengths. You can take classes in other majors like computer science, business, engineering, psychology, and more.

Many universities now offer hybrid programs that combine elements of business, design, entertainment and technology that are super unique and interesting. That kind of diversity is a significant advantage of attending a university.

Here are some example of Universities and colleges with art programs - this is not a comprehensive list. You will notice that private Universities are generally more expensive, while State schools are a fraction of the price!

Full Name	University Art Programs	In-State Tuition	Website
University of Southern California	Animation & Digital Arts (https://cinema.usc.edu/animation/), Interactive Media & Games (https://cinema.usc.edu/interactive/)	\$260,000	https://www.usc.edu
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth	Game Art and Animation (https://www.umassd.edu/programs/animation-game-arts/), Illustration (https://www.umassd.edu/programs/illustration/)	\$250,000	umassd.edu
University of Michigan	Art & Design (https://stamps.umich.edu/undergraduate-programs)	\$60,000	umich.edu
University of California Los Angeles	Design Media Arts (http://www.design.ucla.edu), Art (https://www.art.ucla.edu)	\$50,000	ucla.edu
The Ohio State University	Art (https://art.osu.edu), Design (https://design.osu.edu)	\$50,000	osu.edu

University of Texas at Austin	School of Design and Creative Technologies (https://designcreativetech.utexas.edu)	\$50,000	utexas.edu
San Jose State University	Animation/Illustration (https://www.sjsu.edu/design/undergraduate-programs/animation-illustration/index.php)	\$30,000	sjsu.edu
University of Florida	Digital Arts & Sciences (https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/colleges-schools/UGART/DAR_BADA/)	\$30,000	ufl.edu
California State University, Fullerton	Entertainment Art/Animation Concentration (https://catalog.fullerton.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=61&pooid=28523&returnto=7389)	\$30,000	fullerton.edu

III. Private Art Academies

Private art academies are the newest secret to becoming a professional artist! Sure, they might not be as fun as traditional art schools, for some classes are held online or in small office buildings. The classes are catered towards students who are very serious about working in the entertainment industry as a professional artist. The teachers are some of the best in the industry and truly care about your progress.

One big advantage of private academies is the flexibility and affordability. You can take classes while studying at a university or art school, or even while working a part-time job. The classes are very affordable - usually around \$800 for a 10 week course. But keep in mind that these schools don't offer a degree or certificate when you finish their classes. You'll need to be self-driven, with no grades or tests. You are responsible for your own learning. It's kind of like homeschooling!

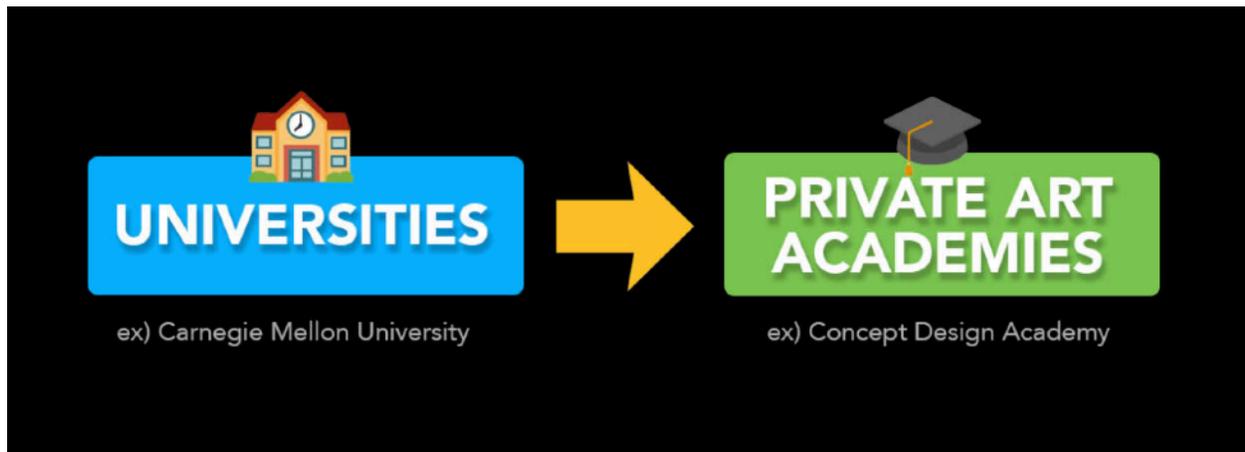
If you're willing to do your own research and create your own curriculum, a private art academy can be a budget-friendly option for getting an art education without the hefty price tag of traditional art schools. Just know that you won't have as much guidance or a set curriculum. If that's what you're looking for, an art school might be a better fit.

School Name	Location	Price	Website URL
Concept Design Academy	Los Angeles, California	\$820/ 10 weeks	conceptdesignacad.com
Brainstorm School	Burbank, California	\$820/ 10 weeks	brainstormschool.com
Watts Atelier	Encinitas, California	\$350/ 5 weeks	wattsatelier.com
Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Arts	Van Nuys, California	\$700/ 10 weeks	laafa.edu
CGMA	Online Only	\$800/ 8 weeks	cgmasteracademy.com/

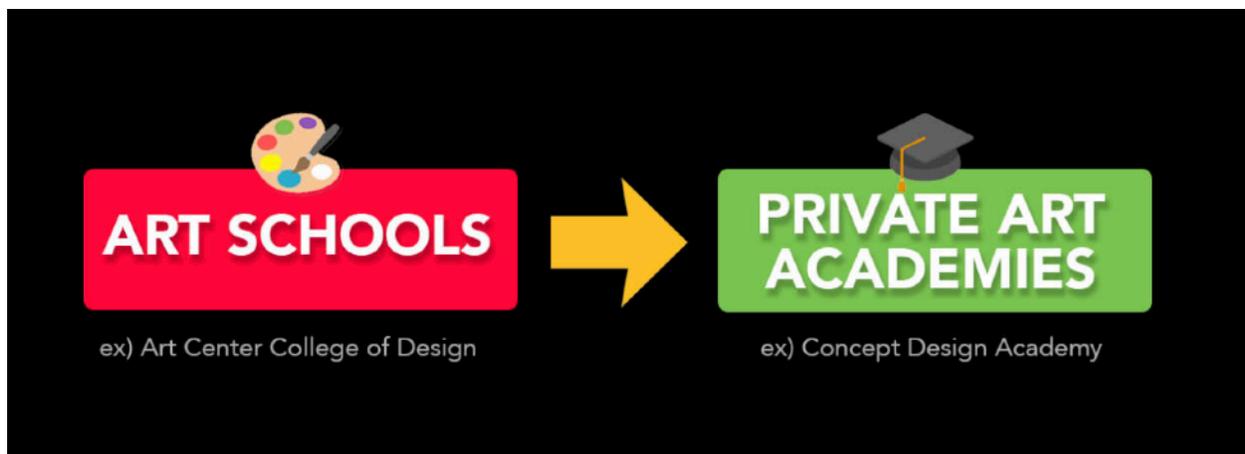
IV. A Super Combo

Now, it may seem like a hard decision to pick something, but really, there are many ways to go about it.

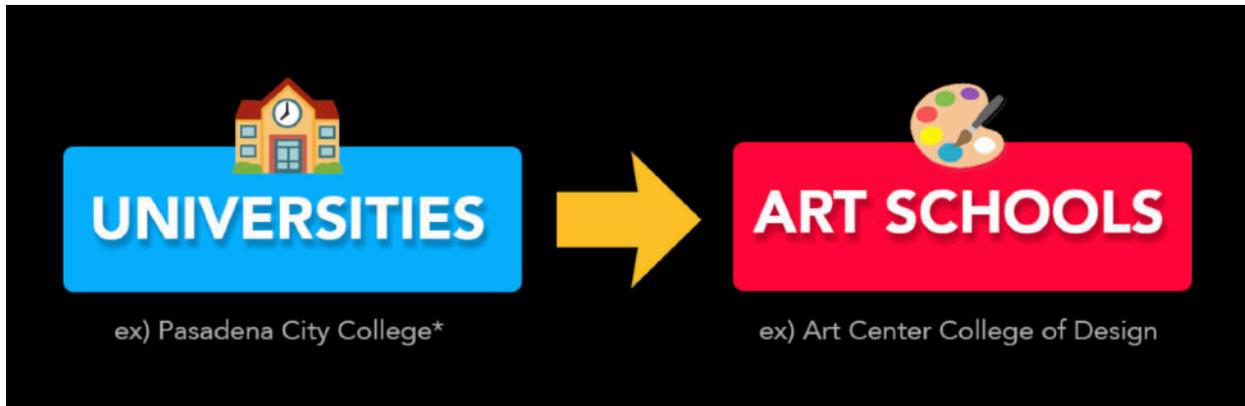
For example, you could combine a university degree with Private Art Academy, like I did. Personally, I attended Carnegie Mellon for a degree in Industrial Design, and after graduation, I took courses at Concept Design Academy to improve my digital painting skills. Many people follow this approach.



Or you could attend art school and then enhance your skills at a private art academy.



Another option is to start at a community college to complete general education courses before transferring to an art school to save money.



Ultimately, there's no right or wrong way to go about it. Contrary to what college counselors want you to believe, I don't think going to a specific school will determine the trajectory of your entire career. There are even many successful artists who are self-taught who have had successful careers. You determine your success, not your school!

Part 3: Art School Rankings

You may be wondering, “Well then, does art school really matter?” Yes I still do think can definitely helpful. I have chosen my top 10 favorites institutions for those wanting to work in the entertainment industry. I have personally have attended most of these schools myself, or know friends who have.

These rankings are not based on the prestige or luxuries that the school provides. Rather, they are based on school's ability to produce graduates who get jobs in the industry. Keep in mind that it's not always the best choice to attend the most highly ranked school, but the school that best suits your needs.

Art School Rankings

Rank	School/Program	Location	Price/Rate	In-person/Online	Job Placement	Degree (Y/N)	Level	Suggested Age Range	Description
1	FZD School of Design	Singapore	\$32,000 for a 1-year program	In-person	90%	Yes	Advanced	21+	A Singapore-based school renowned for its 1-year entertainment design program, providing a Industrial design certificate upon completion.
2	Art Center College of Design (ACCD)	Pasadena, California	\$200,000 for a 4-year program	In-person	82%	Yes	Advanced	18+	A prestigious institution in Pasadena, California, offering diverse majors and classes in product design, transportation design, and entertainment design.
3	Concept Design Academy (CDA)	Pasadena, California	\$800 for a 10-week class	In-person/Online	N/A	No	Intermediate	18+	A highly respected art academy in Pasadena, California, providing affordable college-level classes in concept art and entertainment design, with a wide range of subjects taught by industry professionals.
4	Brainstorm School	Burbank, California	\$800 for a 10-week class	Online	N/A	No	Intermediate	18+	A private art academy in Burbank, California, focusing on foundational and advanced classes for the gaming, movie, and animation industries, offering online classes and workshops in various art disciplines.
5	Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art (LAAFA)	Van Nuys, California	\$800 for a 10-week class	In-person/Online	N/A	No	Intermediate	18+	An art academy in Van Nuys, California, with a traditional approach, specializing in figurative art, offering a combination of in-person and online classes in mediums like oil painting and sketching.
6	Watts Atelier	Encinitas, California	\$325 for a 5-week class	In-person/Online	N/A	No	Intermediate	18+	A San Diego-based art school led by master artist Jeff Watts and his senior students, following the Atelier-style training approach, providing in-person and online classes in various art disciplines.
7	Art Schools	Varies	\$100,000 - \$200,000 for a 4-year program	In-person	Varies	Yes	Intermediate	18+ (Precollege: 14+)	A diverse range of art schools with varying tuition fees and job placement rates, requiring individual research and evaluation based on curriculum, portfolios, and career goals.
8	Universities	Varies	\$30,000 - \$60,000 for a 4-year program	In-person	Varies	Yes	Beginner	18+	A mix of universities offering art programs with different costs and academic options, providing the flexibility to supplement education with specialized art academies.
9	Self-Paced Online Classes	N/A	\$30 - \$100/ month	Online	N/A	No	Beginner	14+	A cost-effective and flexible option for learning foundational art skills through various platforms and schools, including Cubebrush, Schoolism, New Masters Academy, Digital Art Bootcamp, and CGMA.
10	Mr. Chris Art Studio (Outschool)	N/A	\$20/week	Online	N/A	No	Beginner	10-18	A high-quality and affordable art studio on the Outschool platform, providing art classes for middle school and high school students, covering figure drawing, character design, environment drawing, vehicle design, and digital painting.

1. FZD School of Design

Detail	Information
Website	https://fzdschool.com/
Location	Singapore
Price/Rate	\$32,000 for a 1-year program
Format	In-person
Job Placement	90%
Degree	Yes
Level	Advanced
Suggested Age Range	21 and up

At the top of my list is FZD School of Design in Singapore. It's a one-year program that costs around \$32,000. Its accelerated program condenses what many other schools take four years to teach into just one year. It's a unique blend of an art school and a private art academy. While you don't get a college degree, you do receive an industrial design certificate upon graduation. It's kind of like a vocational school.

I chose FZD as my #1 school because its graduates consistently have top-notch skills. According to its website, its job placement rate is above 90%. Two of my friends went there, and they both produced fantastic portfolios and landed jobs after graduation. The school mostly focuses on the game and film industry, covering areas such as environmental, vehicle, and character design.

At FZD, there are no majors. You don't get to choose your classes—you just do what they tell you to do. This intense training allows the students to form strong bonds with each other. At FZD you can expect to work 18+ hours a day, pull multiple all-nighters on a weekly basis, experience a heavy toll on mental and emotional health, work in a culture of attrition where many students drop out.

This school is not for most people. As a parent, you may want to consider your child's personality, work ethic, and ability to handle stress before sending them to FZD. But if they are able to survive the program, there is a good chance that they will have a successful career.

Author's Note: As of 2023, FZD is no longer accepting new students. However, I still choose to include FZD in the rankings to serve as an educational benchmark of quality and value. The senior Art Director of FZD - Kingston Chan - has been hired by Mages Institute (<https://mages.edu.sg/program/art/concept-art/>) as program director. Since the program is brand new, it is too early for me to recommend it and assess its efficacy.

2. Art Center College of Design (ACCD)

Detail	Information
Website	https://www.artcenter.edu
Location	Pasadena, California
Price/Rate	\$200,000+ for a 4-year program
Format	In-person
Job Placement	82%
Degree	Yes
Level	Advanced
Suggested Age Range	18 and up

Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California is a highly esteemed institution and one of my top choices for art schools. Its four-year program comes with a steep price tag of about \$200,000. I'd like to note that the founder of FZD, Feng Zhu, also attended Art Center.

Art Center is well-regarded for its Product Design and Transportation Design programs. Its Entertainment Design program has been birthed out of the hybrid of its Industrial Design and Illustration programs. Compared with FZD, there are a lot more options for choosing majors and classes. Students have ample opportunity to explore their artistic style and take classes with a variety of instructors.

However, it's worth noting that the quality of student work can be inconsistent, with some graduates leaving with impressive portfolios while the some students struggle to find work. Art Center reports an 82% job placement rate, but this data is from 2016. Many alumni have also expressed concern about a decline in the quality of work produced by the students.

Nonetheless, I still think Art Center is a very strong school, and one of my top choices for art schools.

3) Concept Design Academy (CDA)

Detail	Information
Website	http://conceptdesignacad.com
Location	Pasadena, California
Price/Rate	\$800 for a 10-week class
Format	In-person/Online
Job Placement	N/A
Degree	No
Level	Intermediate
Suggested Age Range	18 and up

Concept Design Academy is a highly respected private art academy in Pasadena, California, offering online and in-person classes. Despite having just two classrooms, the academy provides a quality education that rivals that of Art Center College of Design, but at a fraction of the cost.

At CDA, 10-week classes typically cost around \$800. Offering such affordable college-level classes was a revolutionary concept when the academy opened in 2007. Kevin Chen, the founder of CDA, is himself an alumnus of Art Center, and many of the instructors are industry professionals.

Compared to FZD, CDA offers a wider range of classes, including storyboard and figure drawing classes, such as the widely-regarded analytical figure drawing class taught by Kevin Chen.

One potential downside to attending CDA is that it doesn't offer a formal curriculum, which may limit opportunities to bond with classmates. Nonetheless, I believe that Concept Design Academy is an excellent choice for artists seeking top-quality education in concept art and entertainment design, without having to spend a fortune.

4) Brainstorm School

Detail	Information
Website	https://www.brainstormschool.com/
Location	Burbank, California
Price/Rate	\$800 for a 10-week class
Format	Online
Job Placement	N/A
Degree	No
Level	Intermediate
Suggested Age Range	18 and up

Brainstorm School is a private art academy located in Burbank, California that currently offers online classes only. The school was founded by James Paick and John Park, both Art Center alumni, and both being former instructors at Concept Design Academy.

The school has a comprehensive class schedule, offering a wide range of foundational classes applicable to the gaming, movie, and animation industries. They also offer more cutting-edge classes that involve 3D and virtual reality.

Similar to Concept Design Academy, Brainstorm School offers 10-week classes at a cost of around \$800. Additionally, they offer a variety of one-day and five-week workshops. The quality of education provided by Brainstorm School is exceptional and is also considered one of the best art schools in the world.

5) Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art (LAAFA)

Detail	Information
Website	https://laafa.edu
Location	Van Nuys, California
Price/Rate	\$800 for a 10-week class
Format	In-person/Online
Job Placement	N/A
Degree	No
Level	Intermediate
Suggested Age Range	18 and up

If you're looking for a more traditional art education, the Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art in Van Nuys, California, may be the perfect fit for you. This private academy offers a diverse range of classes that focus on mediums such as oil paintings, charcoal, drawings, and sketching with pencil. It's a great option for those who prefer a non-digital approach to art and are interested in making a living through traditional techniques.

Similar to the previously mentioned schools, the Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art offers 10-week classes for approximately \$800. They provide a combination of in-person and online classes, allowing for flexibility in scheduling.

The in-person experience at the Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art is pretty awesome. The academy is small and beautiful, resembling a studio in Italy. The atmosphere is intimate and conducive to creativity, making it an ideal environment for artists to learn and grow.

6) Watts Atelier

Detail	Information
Website	https://www.wattsatelier.com/
Location	Encinitas, California
Price/Rate	\$350 for a 5-week class
Format	In-person/Online
Job Placement	N/A
Degree	No
Level	Intermediate
Suggested Age Range	18 and up

Watts Atelier is a fantastic school in San Diego, CA that focuses on traditional techniques. Unlike LAAFA, which has a diverse range of instructors, Watts Atelier is run by master artist Jeff Watts and his senior students. This Atelier style training is similar to a karate dojo, where all the instructors will share similar techniques and philosophies.

The school offers both in-person and online classes, with in-person classes being the most affordable at just \$350 for 5 weeks. They also occasionally offer intensive 1-week bootcamps, which are a great way to experience their teaching style in a short amount of time. If you're able to attend in-person, I highly recommend it - the studio has an old-school and magical vibe that takes you back to simpler times.

7) Art Schools

Detail	Information
Location	Varies
Price/Rate	\$100,000 - \$200,000 for a 4-year program
Format	In-person
Job Placement	Varies
Degree	Yes
Level	Intermediate/ Advanced
Suggested Age Range	18 and up (Precollege: 14+)

I'm grouping Art Schools together in a category. I'll be honest with you, many professionals nowadays don't recommend going to Art Schools because they are so expensive - 200,000 for a 4 year programs. There are more affordable alternatives that offer similar or even better levels of guidance.

That said, there's undeniable value in attending an art school. They provide a structured curriculum and a sense of community, but this comes at a premium. If you're set on art school, I think these 3 are the better of the bunch:

- 1) LCAD:** LCAD offers a solid program at a reasonable price point. (\$140k)
- 2) Art Center:** Known for providing a top-tier art education experience. (\$200k)
- 3) Cal Arts:** Specializing in animation, Cal Arts boasts numerous graduates working in the animation industry. (\$220k)

Lastly, a word of caution. Don't choose a school solely based on amenities and fun experiences. The art industry is fiercely competitive, and success hinges on dedication and hard work. Remember, your education is a crucial foundation for your future in the art world. Before you dive into applications, here are some crucial steps to consider:

- 1) Evaluate the Work:** Take a look at the online gallery to see if the school's style aligns with your artistic aspirations.
- 2) Study Portfolios:** Search for student portfolios to gauge the quality of work produced at the school.
- 3) YouTube Insights:** Check out YouTube videos to get a sense of the school's lifestyle and culture.

4) Question Rankings: Be cautious of schools that heavily advertise rankings or suspicious job retention numbers; they can be misleading. The student's work should speak for itself.

5) Pre-College Programs: Consider attending a pre-college program at these Art Schools. These programs, often subsidized or even free (*Academy of Art University in San Francisco provides free in-person and online classes*), provide a taste of the school's environment. It's an excellent way to assess if the school is the right fit.

Art School Pre-College Programs

Name	Location	Website
Academy of Art University	San Francisco, California	https://www.academyart.edu/art-degree/pre-college-art-design-experience/
Art Center College of Design	Pasadena, California	https://www.artcenter.edu/teens
California College of the Arts (CCA)	San Francisco, California	https://www.cca.edu/academics/pre-college
Ringling College of Art and Design	Sarasota, Florida	https://www.ringling.edu/precollege
Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD)	Savannah, Georgia	https://www.scad.edu/academics/pre-college-programs
School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC)	Chicago, Illinois	https://www.saic.edu/continuing-studies/high-school/
Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)	Baltimore, Maryland	https://www.mica.edu/non-degree-learning-opportunities/programs-for-youth/programs-for-teens/summer-pre-college-program/
Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MassArt)	Boston, Massachusetts	https://massart.edu/youth-programs
Cooper Union	New York, New York	https://cooper.edu/academics/outreach-and-pre-college
Pratt Institute	Brooklyn, New York	https://www.pratt.edu/precollege
School of Visual Arts (SVA)	New York, New York	https://sva.edu/academics/pre-college/grades-9-12
Carnegie Mellon University	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	https://www.cmu.edu/pre-college

8) Universities

Detail	Information
Location	Varies
Price/Rate	\$30,000 - \$60,000 for a 4-year program
Format	In-person
Job Placement	Varies
Degree	Yes
Level	Beginner/Intermediate
Suggested Age Range	18 and up

I am lumping universities are together in a category as well. Generally, there are two reasons why a student wants to go to university.

The first reason is if the student has a really stellar academic record, and they want to capitalize on that by attending a very prestigious, Ivy League school for the brand name recognition. That's totally fine, but be warned that the art program at the schools may be a lot more conceptual. A popular choice for students is to enroll at the Brown/ RISD Dual degree program, so they can have a degree with an Ivy League school on it, while also attending an art school. Just to make sure to look at the student gallery and make sure that's what you want to do.

Another reason why a student may want to go to university is for budget reasons or to get a general education. Try to enroll in a program that is more technical and technology focused. There are some good ones out there.

Many university students supplement their studies by taking classes at places like concept design academy on weekends or during the summer. It's a great combination, especially since CDA does not offer a degree upon completion of their courses. The University / Private Art Academy pairing is a great combo. It is affordable, gives you both a general and specialized education, and you get to learn at your own pace... If the 18-hour work day at FZD scares you.

9) Online classes.

Detail	Information
Price/Rate	\$30 - \$100/month
Format	Online
Level	Beginner
Suggested Age Range	14 and up

Self-paced online classes are a fantastic and affordable way for you to build a foundation if you are just starting out. The only problem is that there are too many choices, and it's difficult to know where to start.

One school I want to highlight is Cubebrush by Marc Brunnet. He packaged up his courses into a neat program so it's easy to follow along. Even though, I haven't taken his courses before, he has great reviews from his students, and based on his YouTube channel, Marc seems to be a good communicator and instructor.

Take a look at some of these online classes. You can decide which school is best for you based on it's industry focus.

School Name	Focus	Price	Website
Silver Drawing Academy	Character Design for TV Animation	\$29/ month	https://www.silverdrawingacademy.com
Schoolism	Animation Industry & Others	\$30/ month	https://schoolism.com
Project City	Animation Industry	\$33/ month	https://www.projectcity.tv/
New Masters Academy	Traditional Fine Art	\$36/ month	https://www.nma.art/
Cubebrush	Character Design for Video Game Industry	\$50/ term	https://cubebrush.co/mb
Learn Squared	Advanced Concept Art & 3D for Film Industry	\$100-\$200/ class	https://www.learnsquared.com/
Proko	Traditional Fine Art	\$25-\$300/ course	https://www.proko.com
Digital Art Bootcamp	Digital Character Illustration	\$250/ bootcamp	https://www.digitalartbootcamp.com/
CGMA	Concept Art and VFX for Video Game Industry	\$800/ 8 weeks Includes live feedback	https://www.cgmasteracademy.com/

10) Mr. Chris Art Studio.

Detail	Information
Website	https://www.chris-chien.com
Price/Rate	\$20/ week
Format	Online
Level	Beginner
Suggested Age Range	10-15

This is my art school. I will do my best to give an objective review.

Mr. Chris Art Studio provides live interactive online classes for students ages 10-15. The cost around \$20-\$25 per week and it's hosted on the Outschool platform, an online educational marketplace.

My classes are ideal for students who are fairly serious about art and love drawing. The classes are designed to be very fun and interactive, but teach relatively serious topics that are often found in art schools.

Some of the topics I teach include figure drawing, character design, environment drawing, vehicle design and digital painting. Compared to the classes at art schools, my classes are slower paced so that students can follow along and draw step-by-step.

My group classes are only available to kids 18 and under. But I do also offer private lessons for adults as well as serious high schools students who are trying build a portfolio for college.

Ranking Summary

Rank	School	Price	Description
1	FZD School of Design	\$32,000 for a 1-year program	A Singapore-based school renowned for its 1-year entertainment design program, providing a industrial design certificate upon completion.
2	Art Center College of Design (ACCD)	\$200,000 for a 4-year program	A prestigious institution in Pasadena, California, offering diverse majors and classes in product design, transportation design, and entertainment design.
3	Concept Design Academy (CDA)	\$800 for a 10-week class	A highly respected art academy in Pasadena, California, providing affordable college-level classes in concept art and entertainment design, with a wide range of subjects taught by industry professionals.
4	Brainstorm School	\$800 for a 10-week class	A private art academy in Burbank, California, focusing on foundational and advanced classes for the gaming, movie, and animation industries, offering online classes and workshops in various art disciplines.
5	Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art (LAAFA)	\$800 for a 10-week class	An art academy in Van Nuys, California, with a traditional approach, specializing in figurative art, offering a combination of in-person and online classes in mediums like oil painting and sketching.
6	Watts Atelier	\$350 for a 5-week class	A San Diego-based art school led by master artist Jeff Watts and his senior students, following the Atelier-style training approach, providing in-person and online classes in various art disciplines.
7	Art Schools	\$100,000 - \$200,000 for a 4-year program	Art schools with varying tuition fees and job placement rates, requiring individual research and evaluation based on curriculum, portfolios, and career goals.
8	Universities	\$30,000 - \$60,000 for a 4-year program	Universities offering art programs with different costs and academic options, providing the flexibility to supplement education with specialized art academies.
9	Self-Paced Online Classes	\$30 - \$100/month	A cost-effective and flexible option for learning foundational art skills through various platforms and schools, including Cubebrush, Schoolism, New Masters Academy, Digital Art Bootcamp, and CGMA.
10	Mr. Chris Art Studio (Outschool)	\$20/week	A high-quality and affordable art studio on the Outschool platform, providing art classes for middle school and high school students, covering figure drawing, character design, environment drawing, vehicle design, and digital painting.

Suggested Currciulum

All the information may be a little bit overwhelming, but it just really depends on what your skill level is.

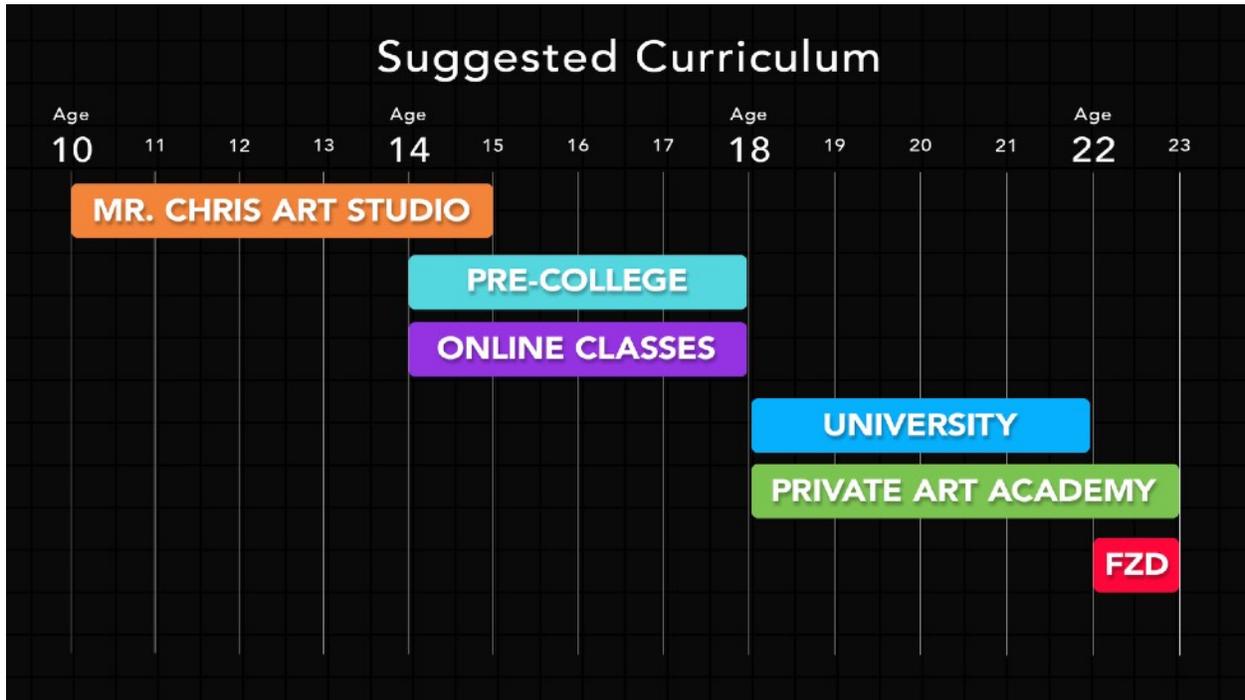
For example, you can start with my art school or any local art studio near you.

When you get to high school, you can start taking Pre-College programs or online classes if there isn't an art college near you.

After you graduate high school, you could enroll at a state university, while simultaneously taking classes at Private Art Academy.

And if you want more training, you can enroll at FZD and treat it like a graduate level program.

There is no one right way, you have a multitude of options.



Part 4: Final Tips

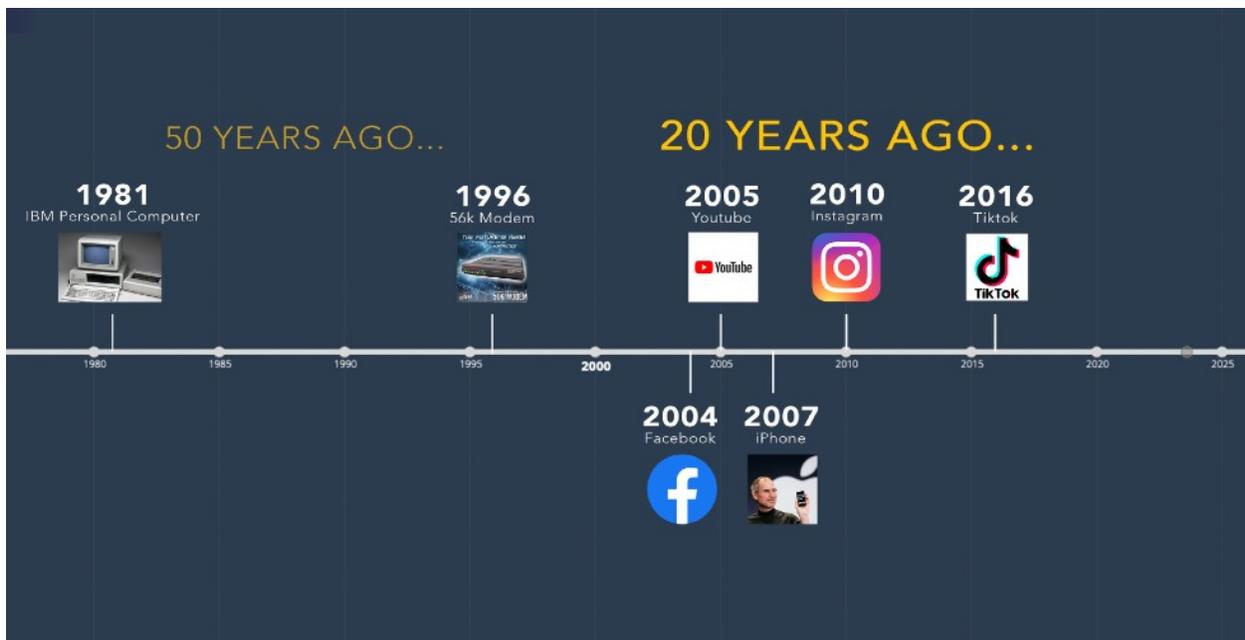
All right before we get to the final tips, I need to tell you an important story.

There once was an old art teacher who everyone loved. He created paintings for famous movie posters and big magazines covers back in the day. His oil painting style was masterful and alluring - making him a favorite among students. One student in particular loved this old teacher's style so much he tried to mimic the style in every way. When the student graduated from art school and started to venture off on his own and apply to many jobs, he kept on getting turned down, despite having a beautiful portfolio. Why do you think that was?

Well, there are probably a number of possibilities. We don't know for sure...

- Perhaps it stemmed from the fact that the student had failed to cultivate a distinct, personal style of his own.
- It could be attributed to his reluctance to embrace modern standards, such as digital painting.
- Maybe it was because the demand for hand-painted movie posters, advertisements, and book covers had waned with the evolving world.

The main point is this: the art careers and art schools I talk about in this video will one day not exist. It's not a question of "if," but a matter of "when." Even this video will one day become obsolete.



1) Embrace change.

Many traditional artists emphasize the importance of fundamental skills, but that's only half the battle. It's also crucial to be acquainted with and fluent in the latest technologies for a successful art career. Even if you prefer traditional mediums like oil painting or gouache, you can still achieve success. However, modern technologies such as social media, YouTube, a website, and email are essential for promoting and selling your work to a modern audience.

One of the most significant recent changes in the art community is the emergence of AI. Most artists view it as unethical, considering AI models were trained on artists' work without their consent. The advent of AI is already displacing many artists from their jobs. Some traditional artists are suing AI companies and advocating for changes in laws to protect the rights of traditional artists.

While I do advocate for proper compensation of artists and ethical AI practices, I believe it's essential to mention this daunting dilemma. I want to caution you that the art jobs I discussed in this video and eBook may have a chance of disappearing, similar to the story I mentioned about the old man and his student. However, if there is technology available that can make people ten times more productive, why not use it?

One could speculate that there will be a significant decline in the number of employed artists but a surge in the number of independent artists. Just as designers can launch six-figure projects on Kickstarter or YouTubers can create productions rivaling Hollywood studios, artists in the future may be able to undertake projects that compete with large corporations.

In the future, it may be possible for independent creators to utilize AI to handle tedious tasks such as 3-D modeling, animation, visual effects, compositing, editing, and coding. Regardless of whether you aim to create a video game or a short film, AI will be able to assist in many tasks, provided you can competently perform the task without AI's help. You need to know what to instruct the AI to do.

Author's Note: *Look, I'm not Pro-AI, I'm not Anti-AI. I'm just "Pro-helping your child make a living as an artist when they grow up." I believe it's essential for art students to learn the latest technologies like coding, 3D modeling, VR, AR, and social media, in addition to honing their artistic fundamentals. Take art classes, but take coding classes as well! Both tradition and technology are more important than ever."*

2) Embrace Adversity

Art is a tough career; it's similar to being a professional athlete, singer, dancer, or actor. Some become successful, but the majority don't. If you want this to be your job, you need to be very proactive in building your career.

According to studies:

- Only 1.2% of college basketball players make it to the NBA (Study by NCAA).
- Only 2% of actors make a living from the profession (Study by Queen Mary University of London).
- Only 3% of people who go into dancing actually become professionals. (danceparent101.com)
- Only 10% of art school graduates become working artists (Study by <http://bfamfaphd.com>).

As a teenager, you should be:

- Researching art careers and art schools.
- Developing your portfolio for college.
- Entering art contests and applying for scholarships.
- Drawing every day to improve your skills.
- Asking teachers for critiques to improve your work. And actually applying the feedback to your work and making those changes!

There will be times when art won't be fun.

Imagine if you were a Pro-Basketball player. You don't only get to play basketball when you feel like it. You have to train and work out almost every day, even when you don't want to.

As an aspiring artist, you need to be training and drawing every day as well. Develop the discipline and perseverance to continuously strive toward your goals.

Author's Note: Here's a tip for finding art contests: Simply type in (YOUR CITY or STATE + STUDENT ART CONTEST) in your favorite search engine. For example, try searching for...

- New York City Student Art Contest
- Michigan Youth Art Contest
- California Student Art Contest
- Japan Youth Art Contest

When I was in high school, I entered 5-10 art contests every year. I didn't win every one of them, but it was a great experience and I made many friends along the way. By the time I graduated from high school, I had won over 20 art contests. I hope this serves as motivation and inspiration for my readers to be proactive in pursuing their goals.

Awards and Honors	
2005	
Grand Prize	Aviation Art Competition "Air Sports and Nature in Harmony"
1st Place	Reflections Art Contest "I Wonder Why..."
1st Place	Irvine Fine Arts Show
1st Place	Drug and Violence Prevention Poster Design Contest "Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Each Other"
Scholarship	Dorothy Bragg Scholarship – financial assistance to talented students to further their art education.
Student Art Show - Project Leader	"Vertical Take Off and Landing" Transportation Design Project at Art Center College of Art and Design
Charter Oak Award	Exemplary Performance in Art and Design
Honorable Mention	California Coastal Art and Poetry Contest
Honorable Mention	California Aviation Art Contest "Create an Air Show Poster"
2004	
1st Place	Drug and Violence Prevention Poster Design Contest "Take a Minute, Make Difference"
3rd Place	John Wayne Aviation Art Contest "Flying Saves Lives"
Honorable Mention	California Coastal Art and Poetry Contest
Student Art Show	"Deep Submergence Vehicle" Art Center College of Art and Design
Student Art Show	"Video Game Controller" Art Center College of Art and Design
2003	
1st Place	California Aviation Art Contest "Over a 100 years of Powered Flight"
1st Place	Orange Country Reflections Art Contest "I'm Happy When..."
Student Art Show	"The Figure" Art Center College of Art and Design
2002	
1st Place	Cricket Magazine drawing contest
1st Place	Christmas Card Design Contest (American Pastel Art Association)
2001	
1st Place	Year of the Snake Chinese New Year Poster Contest (Irvine Chinese School)
Outstanding Prize	Mother's Day Children's Drawing Contest (Tawa Supermarket Inc.)
2000	
1st Place	Dare Drug Prevention Poster Contest
4th Place	Southern California Chinese Poster Contest "Halloween"
1999	
Honorable Mention	Southern California Chinese Poster Contest Young Masters Art Show

3) Embrace Money

One of the biggest weaknesses for artists is money and finances. While it's important for artists to follow their dream, it's also important to keep them grounded and have them respect money and its necessity in the world.

If possible, have your child get a job. It could be any simple job such as working at McDonald's or Starbucks. I believe it's essential to have them learn to respect money, work, and develop a good work ethic. If they ever get the opportunity to take any classes related to business, marketing, accounting, or entrepreneurship, that would be a plus too.

Author's Note: *I want to clarify that I'm not suggesting that money should be the sole focus or that one needs to become extremely wealthy. However, it's essential for your child to aspire to earn enough to cover their rent and living expenses. While you might encounter successful artists on YouTube showcasing their \$200,000 incomes, such cases are quite rare. I've observed many of my artist friends (and I've faced this myself) who struggle to make ends meet with their artistic earnings, living paycheck to paycheck, and often taking on additional jobs like working at Starbucks or driving for Uber just to cover their rent. It's crucial to instill in your child the importance of pursuing their dreams while also recognizing the significance of financial stability.*

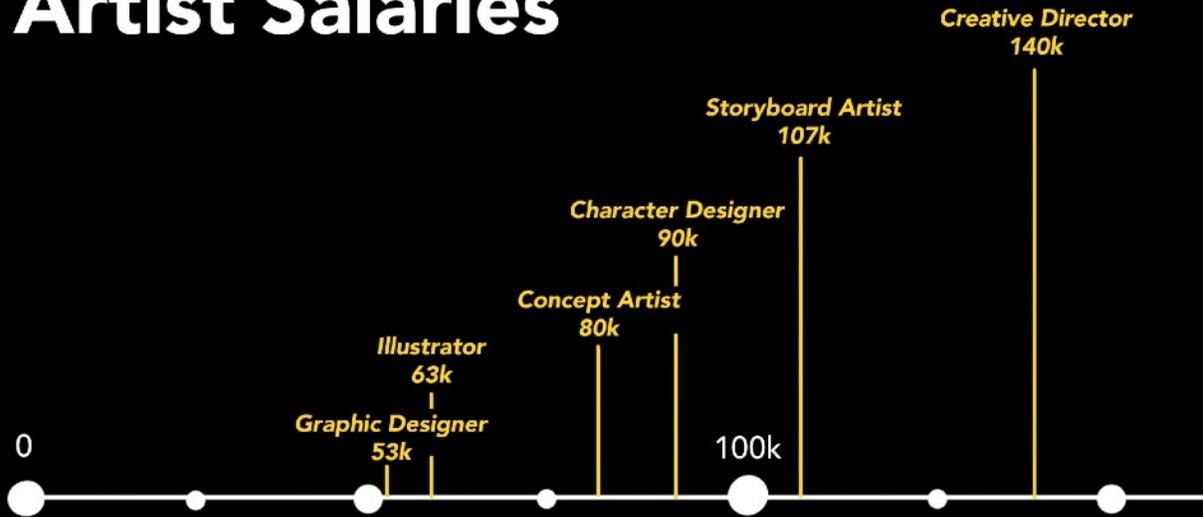
Salary Comparison

These salary statistics are averages sourced from Glassdoor.com. I collected these figures based on data from Los Angeles, CA in 2021. However, please keep in mind that these averages may vary depending on the year and geographical location. It's important to note that these numbers do not necessarily represent "starting salaries" but are more likely indicative of mid-level professionals with 5-10 years of experience.

If you're interested in learning more about money, I recommend checking out the **CNBC Make It** YouTube channel. On this channel, they feature young people from various educational backgrounds, careers, and locations, who openly discuss their earnings, financial habits, and expenditures. It's an excellent and lighthearted resource for introducing kids to financial literacy.

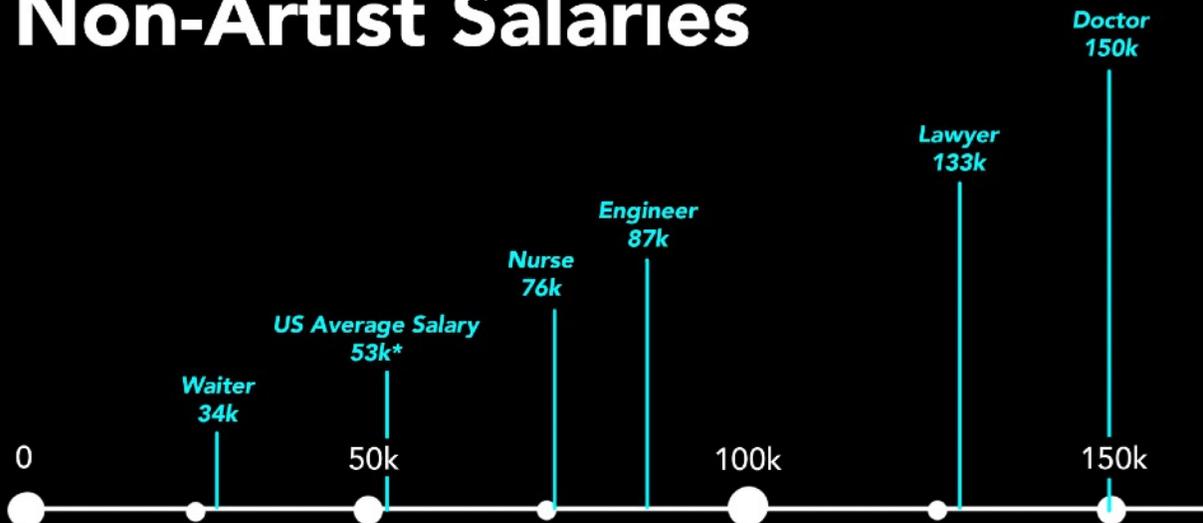
Waiter/ Waitress	\$34,147
Graphic Designer	\$53,550
Illustrator	\$63,706
Nurse	\$76,000
Environment Artist	\$76,570
Concept Artist	\$81,904
Architect	\$88,604
Engineer	\$87,244
Character Designer	\$90,543
Software Engineer	\$101,752
Storyboard Artist	\$107,035
Lawyer	\$133,008
Creative Director	\$139,787
Doctor	\$149,758

Artist Salaries



**Glassdoor average salary statistics from Los Angeles, CA (Dec. 2021)

Non-Artist Salaries



*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) 2021
Salary data based on Glassdoor average salary statistics from Los Angeles, CA (Dec. 2021)

4) Embrace Commissions

Have your child start taking commissions as early as possible. It could be as simple as drawing a portrait for grandma or grandpa. Being able to take orders and hit deadlines is a very important trait for a professional artist. If your child has gotten a summer job working Starbucks or something, they can utilize the customer service skills they gained from the job to help make them a more professional artist!

As early as 13, you could start taking commissions on a website called Fiverr (<https://www.fiverr.com/>). People can submit requests to you and you can get paid for drawing. I think it's important to do this early because it helps you figure out whether or not you enjoy the idea of being a professional artist. Some people hate it when others tell them what to draw, other people thrive on it.

Taking commissions is a great way to build your confidence, develop communication skills, not to mention it looks great on college applications, all while getting paid to learn! If you start taking commissions at age 13, and keep doing it until graduate college at age 21, you will have had 8 years of work experience before you enter the workforce. That's a huge leg up on your competition!

If you have tried taking commissions and you absolutely hate it, there is no shame in pursuing art as just a hobby or pastime that you do for fun. Not everyone is cut out to become a professional artist. For some people, it makes more sense to pursue a traditional career path, and they just draw for fun in their free time.

Author's Note: *It's debatable whether it's more important for students to focus on their schoolwork, enter art competitions, or start freelancing and taking commissions. I have some students who are around 13 to 16 years old and are already taking on art commissions. It's a steep learning curve, but they are gaining valuable experience in areas such as communication, responsibility, business skills, and punctuality.*

If you become skilled at freelancing, you could potentially learn more than you would by entering art contests. As a freelancer, you are challenged to create things that others want, often taking you outside your comfort zone, whereas in art contests, you typically focus on subjects you enjoy. Both approaches have their pros and cons. Both freelancing and winning art competitions can potentially provide some extra income for high school students.

However, I believe that when you start freelancing, you may become more interested in other subjects, such as persuasive writing, business, communication, and economics. This newfound interest may lead you to pay more attention in certain school classes because you realize how important these skills are. So, I believe there's a great synergy between participating in school, art contests and pursuing freelance work. If you have the time, I encourage you to explore all three options.

Conclusion

Hey, guys - thank you for reading my eBook. Writing and creating this video was a labor of love, demanding hundreds of hours of work and multiple revisions. This project consumed half a year of my time, tapped into decades of my own experience, and required reaching out to many friends for advice - all to gain a well-rounded perspective across all industries.

If you spot any grammar errors, please email me at xpchien@gmail.com, and I'll do my best to update them. I'll strive to maintain everything current on my website and continue releasing new editions of the book with updated information.

If you have any school suggestions that would greatly contribute to the book, please don't hesitate to email me as well. While most of the schools included are ones I'm personally familiar with, there may be some in Europe and Asia that I've omitted due to a lack of familiarity.

Consultations & Private Lessons

If you'd like to ask me more questions about colleges or art careers, I do offer consultations to parents and students. You can schedule a consultation or apply for private lessons by going to my website:

[https://www.chris-chien.com/store/p4/Private Lessons with Mr. Chris.html](https://www.chris-chien.com/store/p4/Private%20Lessons%20with%20Mr.%20Chris.html)

Art Classes

I have group classes available, which are very affordable and enjoyable for students under the age of 18. You can sign up using this link:

<https://www.chris-chien.com/classes.html>

Get a **\$20 Credit** when you join Outschool for my classes:

https://outschool.com/?signup=true&usid=C8cUk5fn&utm_campaign=share_invite_link

Get **additional \$20 off** your first art class with me using Promocode: **Try20**

If you've found this book helpful, please consider sharing it with an artist friend who needs it. Feel free to share it on your social media and elsewhere.

Thank you so much,
Mr. Chris



About the Author

Chris Chien is a concept artist for the Themed Entertainment Industry, having worked on award winning projects such as Universal Beijing (Thea Award for Outstanding Achievement-Theme Park 2023) and Sesame Street Land at Seaward Orlando (Voted #1 Best New Amusement Park Attraction in USA Today's 10 Best Reader's Choice Awards, 2020). He is currently an art teacher on Outschool platform, where he ranks among the top 1% of art educators. You can learn more about his work and classes on his website: <http://www.chris-chien.com>

Best Art Schools in the World & Art Careers in the Entertainment Industry Workbook

Part 1 - Careers

1) Please review the art portfolios of artists in the **Animation Industry**. Who are some of your favorite artists, and why? Which specialization do you like the most?

Name	Website	Specialization
Aaron Blaise	creatureartteacher.com	Creature Designer
Bruce Timm	instagram.com/brucetimmofficial	Character Designer
Stephen Silver	silvertoons.com/portfolio	Character Designer
Elora Lyda	eloralysda.com	Character Designer
April Eriksson	aedraws.com	Character & Prop Designer
Arthur Loftis	artstation.com/arthurloftis	Background Layout & Paint
Bre Galloway	artofbregalloway.com	Background Paint
Amy Chen Jr.	amychenjr.com/propdesign	Prop Designer
Toniko Pantoja	tonikopantoja.com	Storyboard Artist
Ben Juwono	bjwno.net	Storyboard Artist
Zac Retz	artstation.com/zacretz	Visual Development
Nathan Fowkes	nathanfowkes.com	Visual Development
Jason Scheier	parallaxinfinite.com	Visual Development

2) Please review the art portfolios of artists in the **Game Industry**. Who are some of your favorite artists, and why? Which specialization do you like the most?

Artist	Website	Specialization
Drew Hill	https://www.artstation.com/drewhill	Characters
Ryan Phair	https://www.artstation.com/ryanphair	Environments
Natasha Tan	https://natashatanart.myportfolio.com	Environments
Bryant Momo Koshu	https://www.artstation.com/peachlab	Robots and Vehicles
Sam Santala	https://www.artstation.com/samsantala	Creatures
Ashleigh Warner	https://www.artstation.com/ashdoodles	Props
Trent Kaniuga	https://www.artstation.com/trentkaniuga	Generalist
Jordan Powers	https://www.artstation.com/jordtron5000	Props

3) Please review the art portfolios of artists in the **Movie Industry**. Who are some of your favorite artists, and why? Which specialization do you like the most?

Artist Name	Website
Andy Park	https://www.andyparkart.com
Phillip Boutte Jr.	https://www.artstation.com/phillipbouttejr
Ryan Meinerding	https://www.artstation.com/ryanmeinerding
Emmanuel Shiu	http://www.eshiu.com
Steve Jung	https://www.stevejungart.com
Dylan Cole	https://dylancolestudio.com
Ben Proctor	http://www.benprocter.com
John J. Park	http://www.jparked.com
Vitaly Bulgarov	https://www.bulgarov.com
Jerad Marantz	http://jeradsmarantz.blogspot.com
Dan Milligan	https://www.danmilligan.com
Ryan Church	http://ryanchurch.com

4) Please review the art portfolios of artists in the **Themed Entertainment** industry. Who are some of your favorite artists, and why? Which specialization do you like the most?

Name	Website	Specializations
Chris Chien	chris-chien.com	Illustration
Luc Steadman	artstation.com/lucsteadman	Illustration
Richard Gutierrez	behance.net/gallery/1536071/Richard-Gutierrez-Themed-Design-Portfolio	Illustration
Brandon Rubino	brandonrubino.com	Show Set Design, Graphic Design
Melody Matheny	melodymatheny.com	Show Set Design, Graphic Design, Illustration
Lin Shih	https://linshihartist.wixsite.com/portfolio	3D Modeling, Graphic Design
Eric Cabico	ericsworldcreative.com	Generalist

5) Among these industries (Animation, Games, Movies, Theme Parks, Independent), which one do you gravitate towards the most, and why? Which specialization (Character, Environment, Vehicle, Creature, Storyboard, etc.) do you like the most?

Feel free to share your answers and preferences in the discussion section in the Outschool Classroom.

Part 2 - Education

1) Art schools offer 4-year accredited programs with majors related to art, such as painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, etc. Based on what you saw in the video, what are some of the pros and cons of attending art school?

2) Please explore the websites of all the art schools and look at examples of student work. Which one is your favorite, and why?

Full Name	City, State	Tuition*	Website URL
Rhode Island School of Design	Providence, RI	\$230,000	risd.edu
School of the Art Institute of Chicago	Chicago, IL	\$220,000	saic.edu
California Institute of the Arts	Valencia, CA	\$220,000	calarts.edu
Pratt Institute	Brooklyn, NY	\$220,000	pratt.edu
Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art	New York, NY	\$200,000	cooper.edu
Ringling College of Art and Design	Sarasota, FL	\$200,000	ringling.edu
Art Center College of Design	Pasadena, CA	\$200,000	artcenter.edu
Otis College of Art and Design	Los Angeles, CA	\$200,000	otis.edu
Maryland Institute College of Art	Baltimore, MD	\$190,000	mica.edu
Savannah College of Art and Design	Savannah, GA	\$160,000	scad.edu
Laguna College of Art and Design	Laguna Beach, CA	\$140,000	lcad.edu
Columbus College of Art and Design	Columbus, OH	\$130,000	ccad.edu
Academy of Art University	San Francisco, CA	\$130,000	academyart.edu

3) Universities offer four-year programs with a variety of different majors, including English, History, Math, Science, and Art. What are some of the pros and cons of studying art at a university?

4) Please explore the websites of all the universities and look at examples of student work. Which one is your favorite, and why?

Full Name	University Art Programs	In-State Tuition	Website
University of Southern California	Animation & Digital Arts (https://cinema.usc.edu/animation/), Interactive Media & Games (https://cinema.usc.edu/interactive/)	\$260,000	https://www.usc.edu
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth	Game Art and Animation (https://www.umassd.edu/programs/animation-game-arts/) , Illustration (https://www.umassd.edu/programs/illustration/)	\$250,000	umassd.edu
University of Michigan	Art & Design (https://stamps.umich.edu/undergraduate-programs)	\$60,000	umich.edu
University of California Los Angeles	Design Media Arts (http://www.design.ucla.edu), Art (< https://www.art.ucla.edu >	\$50,000	ucla.edu
The Ohio State University	Art (https://art.osu.edu), Design (https://design.osu.edu)	\$50,000	osu.edu
University of Texas at Austin	School of Design and Creative Technologies (https://designcreativetech.utexas.edu)	\$50,000	utexas.edu
San Jose State University	Animation/Illustration (https://www.sjsu.edu/design/undergraduate-programs/animation-illustration/index.php)	\$30,000	sjsu.edu
University of Florida	Digital Arts & Sciences (https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/colleges-schools/UGART/DAR_BADA/)	\$30,000	ufl.edu
California State University, Fullerton	Entertainment Art/Animation Concentration (https://catalog.fullerton.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=61&pooid=28523&returnto=7389)	\$30,000	fullerton.edu

5) Private Art Academies are non-accredited schools where you can choose your individual classes. What are some pros and cons of attending private academies?

6) Please explore the websites of all the Private Art Academies and look at examples of student work. Which one is your favorite, and why?

School Name	Location	Price	Website URL
Concept Design Academy	Los Angeles, California	\$820/ 10 weeks	conceptdesignacad.com
Brainstorm School	Burbank, California	\$820/ 10 weeks	brainstormschool.com
Watts Atelier	Encinitas, California	\$350/ 5 weeks	wattsatelier.com
Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Arts	Van Nuys, California	\$700/ 10 weeks	laafa.edu
CGMA	Online Only	\$800/ 8 weeks	cgmasteracademy.com/

Feel free to share your answers and preferences in the discussion section in the Outschool Classroom.

Part 3 - Rankings

1) Examine my top 10 art school rankings. Which ones are YOUR favorite, and why?

Mr. Chris' Top Schools	Website
1. FZD School of Design	https://fzdschool.com/
2. Art Center College of Design (ACCD)	https://www.artcenter.edu/
3. Concept Design Academy (CDA)	https://conceptdesignacademy.com/
4. Brainstorm School	https://www.brainstormschool.com/
5. Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art (LAAFA)	https://laafa.edu/
6. Watts Atelier	https://www.wattsatelier.com/
7. Art Schools	<u>Website Varies</u>
8. Universities	<u>Website Varies</u>
9. Self-Paced Online Classes	<u>Website Varies</u>
10. Mr. Chris Art Studio (Outschool)	https://outschool.com/teachers/Mr-Chris-Art-Studio

2) Go on the school's website find and find what are the portfolio requirements for admission to that school (if any)? What does it take to get accepted?

3) Look up examples of students who have gone to that school. Write down 2-3 student portfolio websites.

To look up examples of student work, type in "*SCHOOL + STUDENT PORTFOLIO*" in Google. For example: "**Art Center student portfolio**" or "**Concept Design Academy Student Portfolio.**"

4) What is a Pre-College program, and what are its advantages?

Go through this list to see if there is a Pre-College program available near you. Examine all the websites to find a program you're interested in. Which one is your favorite and why? If there isn't a school near you, consider taking an online class or checking if your local community college offers any art classes.

Name	Location	Website
Academy of Art University	San Francisco, California	https://www.academyart.edu/art-degree/pre-college-art-design-experience/
Art Center College of Design	Pasadena, California	https://www.artcenter.edu/teens
California College of the Arts (CCA)	San Francisco, California	https://www.cca.edu/academics/pre-college
Ringling College of Art and Design	Sarasota, Florida	https://www.ringling.edu/precollege
Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD)	Savannah, Georgia	https://www.scad.edu/academics/pre-college-programs
School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC)	Chicago, Illinois	https://www.saic.edu/continuing-studies/high-school/
Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)	Baltimore, Maryland	https://www.mica.edu/non-degree-learning-opportunities/programs-for-youth/programs-for-teens/summer-pre-college-program/
Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MassArt)	Boston, Massachusetts	https://massart.edu/youth-programs
Cooper Union	New York, New York	https://cooper.edu/academics/outreach-and-pre-college
Pratt Institute	Brooklyn, New York	https://www.pratt.edu/precollege
School of Visual Arts (SVA)	New York, New York	https://sva.edu/academics/pre-college/grades-9-12
Carnegie Mellon University	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	https://www.cmu.edu/pre-college

3) Online classes are very affordable ways to learn art because the content is pre-recorded. One difficulty is that students may purchase a membership but not spend the time to watch videos or do homework. This is a common aspect of human nature.

Explore this list of online classes to see if there are any that interest you. Which one is your favorite and why?

School Name	Focus	Price	Website
Silver Drawing Academy	Character Design for TV Animation	\$29/ month	https://www.silverdrawingacademy.com
Schoolism	Animation Industry & Others	\$30/ month	https://schoolism.com
Project City	Animation Industry	\$33/ month	https://www.projectcity.tv/
New Masters Academy	Traditional Fine Art	\$36/ month	https://www.nma.art/
Cubebrush	Character Design for Video Game Industry	\$50/ term	https://cubebrush.co/mb
Learn Squared	Advanced Concept Art & 3D for Film Industry	\$100-\$200/ class	https://www.learnsquared.com/
Proko	Traditional Fine Art	\$25-\$300/ course	https://www.proko.com
Digital Art Bootcamp	Digital Character Illustration	\$250/ bootcamp	https://www.digitalartbootcamp.com/
CGMA	Concept Art and VFX for Video Game Industry	\$800/ 8 weeks Includes live feedback	https://www.cgmasteracademy.com/

Feel free to share your answers and preferences in the discussion section in the Outschool Classroom.

Part 4 - Final Tips

1) Look up art contests in your city/state. Simply type in (*YOUR CITY or STATE + STUDENT ART CONTEST*) in your favorite search engine. For example, try searching for...

- New York City Student Art Contest
- Michigan Youth Art Contest
- California Student Art Contest
- Japan Youth Art Contest

Find five art contests that you can enter and list them below, along with their deadlines. Take action and enter them.

2) What were some of your favorite tips from the video? What are some actions you can take right now to help you achieve your goals?

3) What are your goals for one year, five years, and ten years from now?

1 year goal:

5 year goal:

10 year goal:

Feel free to share your answers and preferences in the discussion section in the Outschool Classroom.